

I was surprised to learn that Sinclair Broadcasting plans to force its stations to transmit a lengthy partisan documentary shortly before our highly-contested upcoming elections. Sinclair's free use of the public airwaves comes in exchange for their promise to act in the public interest. With no plans to arrange the airing of an alternate point of view, it is hard to see how Sinclair will meet that obligation. Instead, they will be using their privilege of control over a scarce public resource to achieve a goal of narrow self-interest, without regard to the public's need for balanced, informative news, information, and debate.

Were this to occur at a single station, there would be cause for local concern. But when one corporation can make and execute such a decision affecting one-quarter of all television viewers across the country, something is seriously wrong with our Federal regulatory process. This incident makes it clear that tighter media ownership rules are essential to the health of our democracy, and that station license renewal procedures should involve vigorous investigations of how license holders have addressed their obligations to the public.

Thank you for your attention.